The major part of expenditure is incurred in foreign currency. The increase in expenditure in US dollar terms in 1998-99 and 1999-2000 may be attributed to increase under 'Salaries' head due to implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission recommendations and indexation of Foreign Allowance including payment of pay arrears. The Ministry has advised the Missions abroad to follow Government of India instructions to economise and the Ministry has been maintaining strict checks on the expenditure incurred by Missions abroad. In addition, various steps have also been taken by the Ministry to reduce expenditure on Indian Missions abroad such as use of e-mail for communication purposes, purchase/construction of properties to reduce rental liability etc. As a result of these measures the expenditure on Indian Missions abroad in US dollar terms decreased in 2000-2001.

Chenab Formula

3404. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Partition Plan pops up again" appeared in the 'Telegraph' dated the 23rd June, 2001;

(b) if so. Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether any plan similar or identical to the Chenab formula was discussed in the Indo-Pak Summit meeting for a solution of Kashmir dispute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government have seen the report appearing in the Telegraph on 23.6.2001 titled "Partition Plan pops up again".

The State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the State is under the forcible and illegal occupation of Pakistan. Under the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration which are the cornerstones of our bilateral relations, India and Pakistan are committed to resolving all issues peacefully through bilateral discussion.

(c) No, Sir.

Protest with U.S.A. against offending India's Popular Sentiment

3405. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report

captioned "India greets India's purr with a roar" appearing in the Telegraph* dated the 20th July, 2001;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether any formal protest has been lodged with USA against this step while in offending India's popular sentiment;

(d) if so, the U.S. Government's response thereto and if not the reasons therefor; and

(e) what other steps are proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Government has seen the report that appeared in the Telegraph dated 20th July, 2001.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The name of household pets is not a subject matter for inter-governmental discussion.

(e) Does not arise.

Restrengthening relationship with border countries

3406. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken up by Government for restrengthening the relationship with border countries;

(b) the reasons for restraint relationship between India and Bangladesh and India and Myanmar even though all possible helps have been extended to them; and

(c) the development programmes initiated by Government for improving relationship with South East Asia?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) Sir, a statement is placed on the Table of the House.

(a) It is the persistent policy of the Government of India to have cordial and peaceful relations with all the neighbouring countries. Government have all along striven to develop and strengthen mutually beneficial relations with countries bordering India. Government's efforts in this direction in respect of individual countries are detailed below: